

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
ELSBERRY, MISSOURI

THE IOWA ECOTYPE PROJECT AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA  
CEDAR FALLS, IOWA

TALLGRASS PRAIRIE CENTER  
CEDAR FALLS, IOWA

And  
IOWA CROP IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION  
AMES, IOWA

**NOTICE OF RELEASE OF CENTRAL IOWA GERMPLASM HORSEMINT  
(WILD BERGAMOT) SOURCE IDENTIFIED CLASS OF NATURAL GERMPLASM**

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Iowa Ecotype Project at the University of Northern Iowa (UNI), Tallgrass Prairie Center (TPC), and the Iowa Crop Improvement Association (ICIA) announce the release of a source identified ecotype of horsemint (also referred to as wild bergamot), (*Monarda fistulosa*, L.) collected from the central one-third counties in Iowa.

As a source identified release, this plant will be referred to as Central Iowa Germplasm horsemint to document its origin. Central Iowa Germplasm horsemint was released as a source identified type of certified seed (natural track). It has been assigned the NRCS accession number 9068678.

This alternative release procedure is justified because there are no commercial sources of horsemint collected from native sites throughout this specific region. Propagation material of specific ecotypes is needed for roadside plantings and prairie restoration and enhancement. The potential for immediate use is high.

**Collection Site Information:** Collections were taken from native prairie remnants within the central section of three predetermined tiers of counties located in Iowa.

**Ecotype Description:** Plant description was prepared using Christiansen and Muller (1999) and Runkel and Roosa (1989). Horsemint is a native, perennial forb that grows 2 to 4 feet tall. The stems are square, branched or unbranched, and smooth. The leaves are opposite and oval with rounded bases and long tapering sharp tips; approximately 2 ½ by 1 inch. Margins are sharply toothed and both leaves and stems have a minty aroma and a gray-green color that may be tinged with purple. Flowers are a corolla purple, tubular, 5/8 inch long, two-lipped, the upper covering the stamens and style and the lower recurved. Calyx is narrow with marginal teeth, ¼ inch long, flowering from early July to early August. Four nutlets, 1/32 inch in diameter are enclosed by the persistent calyx. Fruiting begins in late July.

**Environmental Impact Assessment:** Central Iowa Germplasm horsemint is a collection of naturally occurring germplasm that has been unaltered. Central Iowa Germplasm horsemint did not meet the assessment of a plant which could become invasive based on guidelines adopted by the NRCS Plant Materials Program (USDA-NRCS, 2000).

**Anticipated Conservation Use:** The potential uses of Central Iowa Germplasm horsemint include roadside and wildlife plantings, prairie creations and restorations, landscaping, and for increasing plant diversity in prairie communities.

**Potential Area of Adaptation:** Horsemint is common on upland to moist prairies. It can also be found on dry prairies, Loess Hills prairies, along roadsides and in open woods (Christiansen and Muller, 1999). Horsemint is found throughout the eastern and northeastern United States and the central tallgrass prairie.

**Availability of Plant Materials:** G1 material is being produced in limited supply by the Elsberry Plant Materials Center and the University of Northern Iowa, Tallgrass Prairie Center. For information contact USDA, NRCS, Plant Materials Center, 2803 N. Hwy 79, Elsberry, Missouri 63343 (573 898-2012) or the TPC at the University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, IA 50613-0294 (319 273-3005).

#### **References:**

Christiansen, P., and M. Muller. 1999. An Illustration Guide to Iowa Prairie Plants. Univ. of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. p.122.

Runkel, S. T. and D. M. Roosa. 1989. Wildflowers of the Tallgrass Prairie: The Upper Midwest. Iowa State University Press, Ames IA. pp. 216, 217.

USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service. 2000. National Plant Materials Manual, Title 190 (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, June, 2000).

#### **Prepared by:**

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**Signatures for release of:**

**Central Iowa Germplasm horsemint (*Monarda fistulosa* L.)**

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Date

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United States Department of Agriculture  
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